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TIN NEWS REVIEW

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“CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE...”

15 September 1989

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contents:

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE - TIBETANS TELL CHINESE TO LEAVE	1
TOURISTS REPORT EXECUTIONS AND BEATINGS IN LHASA.....	3
RENEWED OFFER OF TALKS	3
OFFICIAL CRITICISES BEIJING POLICY	4
BORDERS SEALED - INDIANS REPATRIATE REFUGEES	5
FIRST TRIAL OF MARCH DEMONSTRATORS - 10 SENTENCED.....	6
TWO NAMED AS SPIES	6
10 MORE SENTENCED - 12 YEARS FOR SINGING	8
ARRESTS IN KHAM AND AMDO	9
PANCHEN LAMA SEARCH BEGINS	10
14,000 TROOPS AIRLIFTED INTO TIBET BY CIVIL AIRCRAFT	10
UK RESUMES ARMS SALES TO CHINA	11
GROUP TOURISTS ENCOURAGED - NEW AREAS OPENED	11
LHASA ECONOMY "VERY GRIM"	12
NEW SCHOOLS	13
HUNGARIANS SUPPORT TIBETAN INDEPENDENCE	14

TIN News Update / London / rb / 8 Aug 1989 revised 14 sept

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN LHASA - Traders tell Chinese to Leave

According to reliable but unconfirmed reports reaching London last month Tibetans living under military rule in Lhasa have refused to obey martial law instructions during a recent incident.

Several hundred people, mainly traders from Kham (Eastern Tibet), and Amdo (North-Eastern Tibet) gathered near the Tibet Regional Government Offices in Lhasa and told officials that they would not register with the authorities.

No. 3 of the Martial Law Decrees issued on March 7th insisted that all Lhasa residents carry identity cards. These are checked by troops at every crossroads. By March 21st this ruling had been extended to all non-residents then in Lhasa, in a move explicitly directed at controlling the 40,000 or so pilgrims, traders and itinerants living in the city, according to official statements.

The ruling added that all those "not contributing to the economy and culture of the region" would face expulsion. This was regarded by some observers as an attempt to exclude Chinese settlers and transients in Lhasa - said to constitute over half the 120,000-strong population - from the attempt to expel non-residents.

Those that were given permits are believed to have been obliged to report daily to the police, and to pay them 1 yuan (30p) for each day of their stay in the city.

The incident is said by one source to have taken place during the Sagadawa festival in mid-June, although other sources say

discussions with the traders took place a month earlier. During the festival strict rules prohibiting public gatherings were relaxed and a large number of people were allowed to gather at the Dragon Pool Park south of the Potala Palace. It was during this celebration, according to one source, that a number of people decided to proceed to the nearby Government offices in protest at threats to expel them from the city.

The demonstrators are said to have told officials that they would not co-operate unless the rules were applied fairly. Since the officials, being Chinese, did not come from Lhasa they were in the same position as the Khampas and Amdo-was. Tibetans, they said, would therefore not register or leave Lhasa unless the Chinese also register or leave.

According to one source, the Khampas' challenge to the authorities brought immediate results. In the following days a number of unregistered Chinese labourers working on some of Lhasa's many building sites were held by police for brief periods, whilst their work units were forced to take out proper papers for the employees.

It is not known what effect this gesture had on the Tibetans who had refused to register. Other reports make it clear that few if any pilgrims are being allowed to enter Lhasa, and those that do are heavily searched at military checkpoints. Recent tourist film confirms reports that the Barkhor Square, usually full of visitors, is nearly deserted, and the market diminished in size.

This incident will be seen by some as indicating a developing interest amongst Tibetans in civil disobedience tactics, although one senior Tibetan commentator close to the sourcees described the affair as more a public airing of views than an incident, calling it "a stubborn sort of disobedience rather than a Gandhian policy." But he added that the Chinese had not dared to intervene on at least one occasion where Tibetans had broken the law and gathered together in large numbers for religious purposes.

Until now there is believed to have been intense debate within Tibet as to whether to pursue a strategy of peaceful demonstration or of violent conflict in the ongoing series of protests against Chinese rule. This incident suggests that other strategies may also be effective.

TIN News Update / London / rb / 11 sept 1989

TOURIST REPORTS OF EXECUTIONS AND BEATINGS IN PRISONS

An unnamed Lhasa resident has alleged that 300 people had been executed or killed in prisons in Tibet since the imposition of martial law six months earlier. The report, carried by Reuters from Beijing on September 8th, noted that the allegation was unconfirmed.

The Reuters report described other unconfirmed accounts from Lhasa, including the allegation that a number of monks from

Ganden monastery had been taken to labour camps in Qinghai. It noted also that recent foreign visitors to Drepung monastery near Lhasa had seen few of the 400 monks usually in residence.

But in one eye-witness account a Westerner reported that he had spoken to Tibetans who had been imprisoned after the March demonstrations. "People showed me marks on their wrists left by handcuffs," said the Westerner, who was not named. "They said they were beaten a lot in prison and deprived of food and water."

It was also reported that martial law restrictions were imposed much more stringently in Tibet than in Beijing. Troops guard every major intersection and are positioned every 100 yards along the roads. Others stand guard, in groups of at least four, along the alleyways in the Tibetan quarter of the city. The soldiers are described as mostly teenagers from Sichuan.

There has been no relaxation of restrictions, and at night all vehicles are stopped at checkpoints and all identity papers are checked. Armoured personnel carriers and military helicopters were described as guarding the outskirts of the city.

TIN News Update / London / rb / 8 Aug 1989 revised 14 sept

OFFER OF TALKS RENEWED

On August 2nd the official Party paper Renmin Ribao (People's Daily) quoted a top official as indicating that the authorities have no intention of lifting martial law in Lhasa, now in its fifth month.

Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, vice-president of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and the highest ranking Tibetan official in China, was speaking in Lhasa itself. Ngapo told martial law troops "to further improve their relations with the Tibetan people".

He went on to renew the offer first made by the Chinese in September last year to hold talks with the Dalai Lama in any venue he might choose, on condition that he give up any claim to independence. Ngapo also said that China would never recognise the Tibetan Government-in-Exile and would only meet with the Dalai Lama or his personal representatives. But the People's Daily report implied that talks would be related to problems concerning religious beliefs; reports last year had described their subject matter in much wider terms as "the future of Tibet".

The offer, which the Chinese have so far refused to make good by adding a number of pre-conditions, indicates a continuing desire by the Chinese Government to soften international criticism of its policies in Tibet. Coming only two months after the June 4th massacres it could also be designed to embarrass the Dalai Lama into making a public statement of refusing to negotiate with the Chinese.

In April Tibetan exile officials said that negotiations could not take place whilst martial law was in force in their country, a statement immediately used by the Chinese to accuse the Tibetans of imposing unfair conditions on the talks.

Last month, during a visit to the United States, the Dalai Lama indicated that he had some doubts about whether the current Beijing Government could be said to be the legitimate representatives of the Chinese people.

Ngapo admits to policy failure in Tibet

In an earlier speech on July 31st to the Tibetan regional people's congress Ngapo had discussed the Communist Party's nationality policies, describing them as "basically correct". But in what could be seen as an implicit criticism of existing nationality policies he went on to announce that new policies were being formulated by the Party.

Three weeks later he was quoted by Radio Lhasa as saying that "development in Tibet is much in arrears when compared with other minority areas."

TIN News Update / London /nh-rb / 14 September 1989

BORDERS SEALED AGAINST TIBETANS

No Tibetans have been officially allowed to leave or enter Tibet since the last bus load of 47 pilgrims left Lhasa for Nepal in April this year. Most of this last group had been issued with permits long before martial law was imposed in March and none were allowed to leave the country with their entire family. At the same time two other truckloads of pilgrims who had also been issued with permits were prevented from departing.

Since then, except for a handful of traders with privileged contacts who have been allowed to enter via Hong Kong, the Tibetan-Nepalese border (the only practical exit for Tibetans) has been sealed.

Tibetans in India shot dead at border

According to a report issued by the Indian press on June 27th seven Tibetans were shot dead after trying to cross into India in the mountains near Ladakh. The bodies were found by shepherds near Cheshul, 150 km south-west of Leh. The

Statesman, a leading Calcutta paper, cited "official sources" as alleging that Chinese security guards were responsible.

India hands 5 refugees back to China

25 Tibetans have recently managed to cross into Sikkim, currently under Indian control, according to the Indian Press Agency UNI in a report published on August 18th. If they do succeed in crossing the mountains Tibetan refugees face severe conditions in Indian prisons close to the borders for periods often up to a year. The Indian authorities justify the sub-standard treatment of refugees by claiming that security risks prevent them moving any refugees south through their defence encampments in case they turn out to be spies.

The report revealed that at least five refugees who escaped to Sikkim were returned to the Chinese by the Indian authorities between April and June this year. It named one as Wangdi, and added that he had fled from Tibet in order to tell the Dalai Lama about the March uprising there. The paper gave no reason for his return to the Chinese authorities.

TIN News Update / London / rb / 10 August 1989

AUG 7: FIRST TRIAL OF MARCH DEMONSTRATORS - 10 SENTENCED

On August 7th the People's Daily reported that ten people were given sentences on July 29th for involvement in the March protests in Lhasa. This was the first trial reported to have taken place there since the incidents, although several thousand Tibetans are thought to have been arrested. It came within days of China's renewed offer of talks with the Dalai Lama.

The paper gave details only of two defendants, one a man named Pemba (pinyin: Bianba), who was sentenced to three years in prison for "counter-revolutionary activities, taking the lead in shouting reactionary slogans and damaging public property," according to Xinhua.

The second named defendant was Lawa Dhundup (pinyin: variously Lhaba Toinzub or Laba Dunzhu), who received a two and a half year sentence for "beating, looting, setting fires and smashing public property" during the March demonstrations.

Eight other defendants received sentences of less than two years in prison for inciting riots, disrupting public order, and destroying public property. It gave no further details.

These sentences are short by Chinese standards, and may be part of a strategy to present a more flexible image to the

outside world. There is no information about the whereabouts or conditions of any other prisoners arrested since March 5th.

Last month the pro-Beijing newspaper Ta Kung Pao claimed in Hong Kong that only about 20 people were being held in prisons in Tibet in connection with the demonstrations. It probably referred only to those charged with offences, and may not have included those held in detention without formal charges.

Three weeks after the troops moved into Lhasa the authorities announced that 200 people had been seized by the security forces by the end of March. In another account it said that 100 had been arrested on the morning of March 8th alone.

AUG 23: TWO TIBETANS NAMED AS "SECRET AGENTS"

On August 23rd the Chinese announced on Radio Lhasa the arrest of two Tibetans on charges of espionage. It is rare for the Chinese to give details of an alleged espionage case.

The two Tibetans are named as Tenzin Phuntsok, 33, and Ngawang Gyalsen [pinyin: Gyalchen], 37. Both were described as residents of Lhasa; in the case of the one from Sera and the other from Deepung [pinyin: Drepung].

The Department of State Security, which deals with espionage cases, claimed that Tenzin had left Tibet twice in the autumn of 1988 to act as a representative from the Ministry of Security of the Tibetan Government in Exile. He was ordered "to stir up trouble in Lhasa" on 12th December 1988, World Human Rights Day. He was said to have "investigated others to set alight to police stations and fire stations". The announcement added, without explanation, that Tenzin was also meant to get rioters to set fire to Tibetan shops.

It claimed that Tenzin had been caught in November 1988, a month before the 12th December demonstration took place. He had been released for a while, after confessing his crime, and then re-arrested for "continuing to engage in espionage" and "sending reports to the secret service abroad."

Ngawang was said to have escorted another secret agent into Tibet after the demonstrations in Lhasa in October 1987. He also was said to have sent back reports to the secret service abroad; no indication was given as to how long he has been held in custody.

Ngawang Gyalsen is known to have been one of the 19 monks from Deepung who led the first recent demonstration in Lhasa on September 27th 1987. He was detained at the time and released three months later.

The report, issued two weeks before the trial described both men as already "believed". This was done, it said, by the collection of "confessions" from the prisoners. It added that the charges were based on "irrefutable facts".

The Radio Lhasa report included a strongly worded attack on the Government-in-exile for "playing a part in the Lhasa riots", which, the report said, had nothing to do with nationality, religion, democracy, human rights or freedom. Separatists who try to separate Tibet from the motherland are doing nothing but lifting a rock to drop on their own feet, added the commentator.

Sept 12th: Both sentenced to 5 years in prison

On September 13th it was announced that on the previous day a court in Lhasa had sentenced the two former monks to five years each for collecting information about the March uprising to send to the Dalai Lama. Although the original report charged Tenzin Phuntsog with instigating riots, the report on their sentences is believed to refer only to the lesser charge of collecting information. It mentioned the use of "foreigners" by the two to send information to Dharamsala.

12 SEPT: 10 MORE SENTENCED - 12 years for leading singing

In a development indicating a shift towards a draconian sentencing policy, ten more Tibetans, including the two accused of spying on August 23rd, were given protracted sentences by a Lhasa court on September 12th. Some of the defendants were charged only with non-violent offences.

Tsering Ngodrup, aged 57, received a twelve year jail sentence for taking part in demonstrations and for inciting young people to sing "reactionary Tibet independence songs". His sentence is exceptionally severe; the Chinese usually charge dissidents with some form of violent crime before handing out such a stiff sentence.

According to the official Chinese news agency, a 22-year old Tibetan, named only as Pasang, was sentenced to life imprisonment for involvement in the March demonstrations. He is accused of "beating, smashing, looting and burning" during the demonstration, the standard charge used by the Chinese against demonstrators.

The two monks named ten days earlier as "secret agents" of the Government-in-Exile were sentenced to 5 years each. But another Tibetan, named only as Ngodrup [pinyin: Ngoizhu], was given a much longer sentence of 11 years, with deprivation of political rights for 4 years. No details were given of the charges against him, except that he was "another spy sent by the Dalai Lama clique". There was no explanation as to why his sentence was heavier than the other two cases, which were heavily publicised in the Chinese press.

Two monks, described in Chinese as Namga and Dagwa [probably Namgyal and Dawa?], were sent to prison for 3 and 4 years respectively for hanging the Tibetan flag in their monastery and for shouting reactionary slogans there, as well as taking part in the march demonstrations in Lhasa.

The Tibetan flag has been raised at a number of monasteries including Tsetang (February 88), Murunyingpa (February 88),

Drepung, (12 Sept 88), Jokhang (February '88) and Sera. These two monks are described as hoisting the flag at their monastery, which is named as Rato.

Rato is a rural village in the Chushu district 25 km southwest of Lhasa. Four monks were arrested there on 5th October last. Villagers and monks at Rato joined together in attacking Chinese officials and troops after a monk, Tsering Dhondup, was arrested. He was seized after he raised the question of Tibetan independence during a political re-education session in the monastery.

At another court in Lhasa three other men, named as Dagwa, Dingling, and Gaisang [probably Kelsang] were given sentences of 8, 5 and 4 years respectively for looting and for destruction of property.

The Chinese usually hold trials of political dissidents in the last few days before important anniversaries, in an attempt to warn off possible demonstrators. The first of the recent series of pro-independence demonstrations took place in Lhasa on September 27th two years ago, followed on October 1st 1987 by a major incident in which police killed at least eight and possibly 19 unarmed civilians. Tibetans last year attempted to mark both these anniversaries by holding demonstrations in the city.

October 1st is also the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic, and is the key day in Beijing's attempt to show its continuing control of the Chinese state. Tension will also be high in Tibet on October 7th, the 39th Anniversary of the Chinese invasion of Tibet.

TIN News update / nh / 12 August 1989

MARCH: INDEPENDENCE ACTIVISTS ARRESTED IN AMDO AND KHAM.

In March this year, not long after the demonstrations in Lhasa, two middle aged men, former monks of Kirti Monastery and two youths in their twenties, were arrested in the far eastern area of Kham Ngaba for distributing independence literature and planning further political activity. An unconfirmed report says that one of the former monks, Choedrak, aged 40, has been tortured in prison. All are being held in a prison in Ngaba.

Ngaba, along with the Rigong area of Amdo, has been a significant rural focus of independence unrest since the months following the Autumn 1987 demonstrations in Lhasa. In June last year monks in all 36 monasteries in the Ngaba Prefecture were prohibited from visiting a large, local trade fair after the authorities were tipped off about an expected demonstration. Despite the heavy presence of security forces, several political posters were pasted up during the two day event, including one on a police motorcycle.

Meanwhile, residents of Labrang Tashikiel (in the Chinese town of Xiahe, Qinghai Province) have been handing out independence leaflets to the few tourists still visiting the area since the

Beijing Massacre. One such pamphlet which begins "the three provinces of Tibet are truly an independent country", attacks "reactionary" and "foolhardy" Tibetans who accept Chinese statements to the contrary. It goes on to mention "some Tibetan ministers [who] are given titles, but do not have any real power and who are like the tools of the Chinese" and concludes with an expression of gratitude to westerners who are supporting Tibet.

TIN News Update / rb / 28 August 1989

SEARCH FOR PANCHEN LAMA "WITHIN CHINA"

The State Council has ordered Tibetan lamas to begin the search for the re-incarnation of the Panchen Lama. On 25th August the Senior Lama-Administrator at Shigatse's Tashilunpo Monastery announced the decision, saying that it was responsible for searching for and recognising the new Panchen Lama, according to the orders received by the State Council in Beijing.

The lama, named in Pinyin as Xiajia Qiangba Chilie, was described as Chairman of the Tashilunpo Monastery Nationality Management. He cited "established historical practices" and the Constitution of the PRC as justification for limiting the search to "within the country".

He also named a number of other high-ranking Tibetan Lamas who would assist in the search, all of whom occupy senior positions in the official religious organisation. Foremost amongst these is Pagbalha Gelek Namgyal, a Tibetan Tulku who is frequently reported by the Chinese press as speaking at high-level political meetings in Tibet and assumed to be close to the Chinese leadership there.

14,000 TROOPS AIRLIFTED INTO TIBET BY CIVIL AIRCRAFT

In an unprecedented use of civilian aircraft for military purposes, 14,000 new army recruits and retired soldiers were airlifted into and out of Tibet this Spring, reported the Hong Kong journal Liaowang on 24 July 1989.

This was described as the first successful attempt at using civil aircraft on a military task, and it involved more than 100 flights. The scale of the operation was described as a first in China's military history, and followed the issuing of detailed new instructions to China's civil airlines.

This development has strategic implications for India, who might otherwise have doubted the possibility of rapid deployment of support troops to the border region. In a separate development which also indicates the increased Chinese potential for rapid troop deployment in Tibet, the People's Daily announced on 25th August that a new communications system had been set up in Tibet.

The system, described only as a sort of network, is said to allow the army in Tibet to make almost immediate contact with its base in Chengdu, in China. A number of tourists last year

reported that even small army posts along the Lhasa-Chengdu road were equipped with large satellite dishes. It is not known if the technology for this communications system was obtained from abroad.

Western Countries back down on China Arms Trade Sanctions

Since the 14,000 troops used in the Spring airlift to Tibet were clearly flown in to police civilians in the martial law area, the news has important policy implications for suppliers of civil aircraft and parts to China.

Members of the United States Congress have called for a linking of all PRC arms sales to its record on human rights in Tibet, following reports in 1988 that U.S.- built Sikorski helicopters adapted for high-altitude use were used to support civilian policing in Lhasa during the unrest in March 1988. Although President Bush in June banned high technology and military sales to China, in mid-August he waived that ban to allow Boeing to sell civil aviation equipment to the PRC.

On 14th September the British Government performed a similar manoeuvre when it announced a re-interpretation of the ban on all military sales agreed by all European Community countries on June 27th. The British now say that the ban applies only to equipment used for "internal repression". The June 27th Declaration had said that the EC countries had agreed on "the interruption of military co-operation and an embargo on all arms sales to the PRC".

The British announced on the same day that they had given GEC Avionics permission to sell radar equipment for China's fighter aircraft despite the ban.

GROUP TOURISTS ENCOURAGED TO VISIT TIBET

On 6th September it was announced that tourists would be able to visit Tibet in groups of at least three people. Details have also begun to emerge of travel agents who claim to be able to procure permits for single tourists to enter the martial law area.

Even these individual tourists will have to declare themselves to be a group, presumably in order to justify having the constant company of a guide, and the restrictions to specified hotels and places. It will also allow the Chinese to charge far higher rates than those paid by individual tourists or backpackers.

Since mid-June the Chinese have been encouraging the tourist trade to Tibet in a bid to bolster the economy and to imply that conditions under martial law are near-normal. Tourists were allowed to enter Lhasa, but only in groups of ten and on condition they stayed at the Holiday Inn Hotel, some 4 km. away from the city. They were restricted to "designated buses", as well as accompanied by guides at all times.

Over 30 groups are believed to have visited Lhasa in June and July, and over 1,000 visitors travelled to Tibet, many in order to go on mountaineering expeditions, according to Government vice-chairman Mao Rubai at a conference in Lhasa on 4th September.

Some visitors have reported that they were escorted at all times by officials. One reported that in a further attempt to minimise contacts between Tibetans and foreigners Tibetan staff at the Holiday Inn Hotel have been replaced by Chinese.

Despite these restrictions many tourists have reported seeing protest leaflets distributed by Tibetans, including five different ones printed in English, and a number of handwritten appeals to the United Nations to send a fact finding mission to Tibet.

New areas opened to tourists

In the meantime a number of new areas have been declared open to foreign tourists, bringing the total in China and Tibet to 624, according to Xinhua on 18th August. Included in the list are Daxian city and Daxian county, Mingshan, Lianping, Wenchuan and Lixian counties in Sichuan. Newly opened areas in Qinghai include Guide, Ledu, Dulan, Ulan, Madoi, Ganca, and Tongren.

Madoi is a wealthy Tibetan village, one of the highest in the world, lying at the source of the Yangtse, and close to a gold mine in Amdo. According a Xinhua report on April 18th, it has been rebuilt and resettled by Chinese settlers, who had been planning on opening it to tourists for some time. Tongren is, or was, a Tibetan town, properly called Rigong. Tibetans there held one or more demonstrations in December 1987, according to reports received by Western journalists in Beijing at the time. The demonstrations are believed to have been held in protest at birth control policies in the region.

Lhasa economy in decline

As the tourist season nears its end, the Chinese are under increasing pressure to attract tourists, upon which Lhasa's economy is now largely dependent. On 2nd May, Ma Lisheng, vice chairman of the Tibet Regional Government, announced that there had been "a marked slide in industrial production" in the first four months of 1989.

He admitted that there was a decline in sales of "ethnic handicrafts", in fact the main product of the capital, but claimed that the "Lhasa riots" were only partly to blame. He referred to "difficulties in tourism" but attributed the problem to "the failure of certain departments to grasp their work well". His remedy was a campaign which called for an increase in "face-to-face leadership work at the grass-roots level."

It is also likely that the Chinese were motivated by a secret ultimatum given to them in April by the American management of Holiday Inn. The American company is believed to have said it

will pull out of Tibet unless the tourist trade is revived before the end of OCTober.

By the end of July the financial situation in the Tibet region was described by Lhasa Radio on August 19th as "very grim". Industrial output was down by 9% over the previous year, and expenditure had gone up by 7.5%.

But Beijing announced two days earlier plans to increase capital investment in the Tibet region by over 50% to 450 million yuan this year. the money is apparently intended for 15 new construction projects, including power stations, waterworks, and transport facilities. Plans for 1990 include an airport, two highways, and a thermal power station. Tourist reports from Lhasa in July indicated considerable building activity in the Chinese parts of the city.

NEW SCHOOLS FOR TIBETANS

On 3rd September a College of Tibetan Medicine was opened in Lhasa. This is the first of its kind, and brings to four the number of higher education institutions in the city. It has already 260 students, all of them Tibetan.

A secondary school for Tibetan pupils was also opened recently, according to the Peepholes Daily on Agues 25th. The paper showed a group of Tibetan pupils in front of their newly built School, reproduced in the traditional Tibetan style.

The school may be intended for Tibetans, but it is not exactly local. It has been built specially for them in Beijing, some 1500 miles from Lhasa. It has 180 pupils, severely of whom were shown in the photograph in the People's Daily. The caption read: "From this you can see the Government and the Party pay special attention to the Tibetan situation - look at their smiling faces telling their parents they will study hard."

CHINESE SHOW PHOTOGRAPHS OF BICYCLES TO JUSTIFY OCCUPATION

On the 30th Anniversary of the Implementation of Democratic Reforms the Chinese held a number of celebrations designed to recall the achievements since 1959, when the Chinese Government took over the running of the Lhasa government and began a series of radical reforms.

To Tibetans the date is commemorated as a memorial to the Lhasa Uprising, in which tens of thousands of Tibetans were killed.

In one major celebration on April 4th in Tsedang (an important regional town 150km south east of Lhasa) thousands of Tibetans were made to wear traditional dress and wave flags. They were made to line the streets to watch a parade of floats accompanied by armed soldiers on motorcycles.

According to witnesses, the floats, mounted on the back of trucks, displayed large photographs indicating economic development since 1959. These included such themes as the introduction of electricity, Chinese hospitals, and bicycles.

The current Chinese attempt to justify their occupation does not refer to socialism but instead emphasises modernisation. This is depicted as a Chinese virtue, only accessible through the Communist Party. This argument is not helped by the presence of thousands of foreign tourists in Tibetan towns who clearly enjoy modern benefits without the aid of either the Chinese or the Party.

BEGGAR CHILDREN EMBARRASS POLICE

Since the 1987 demonstrations hundreds of Chinese and Tibetans have been recruited by the police to keep the Barkhor, the heart of the Tibetan old town, under constant surveillance. Some of them disguise themselves as turquoise sellers, while others give themselves away by walking around the Jokhang the wrong way. In any case most of these undercover police are easily recognisable from their choice of clothes.

Now one eye-witness has reported from Lhasa that some of the many beggar children around the Barkhor have discovered a new way of broadcasting the presence of plainclothes police. The children make a point of attaching themselves to the legs of plainclothes policemen who walk round the Barkhor and hang on them until they get alms, creating quite an unwanted commotion for the undercover cops.

HUNGARIAN SUPPORT FOR TIBET

On June 7th a number of Hungarians held a demonstration outside the Chinese Embassy in Budapest calling for Tibetan independence. This is the first recent display of support for Tibet from a socialist country.

The demonstrators, who were allied to Fidesz, the Alliance of Young Democrats, joined a major demonstration held to protest against the June 4th Massacre in China. The demonstrators carried large banners with the phrase "Pod.rang.wang.gyur. chik" ("Freedom for Tibet") written in Tibetan.

There is a long and prestigious tradition of Tibetan studies in Hungary, although these have for the most part been confined to philological and linguistic studies. But there are strong historical connections between the two nations, partly due to the lifelong travels of the Hungarian scholar Csoma de Koros, who travelled to Turkestan and Tibet in search of the origins of the Magyar people.

The Hungarian Government on the same day issued a strongly worded statement about the events in Beijing, expressing its deep concern and "astonishment" that a socialist country would resort to the "senseless use of violence against ideas and political lines". In March Hungary became the first of the

Warsaw pact countries to express open criticism of a socialist ally when it rebuked Rumania over its human rights record.

PRISON LIFE: THE REAL STORY

The pro-China Hong Kong Paper Ta Kung Bao has given details of life in one Lhasa prison. Apparently prisoners in Lhasa spend much of their time growing vegetables and tending orchards. "Having witnessed the fruits of their labour," continues the article, "They become enthusiastic in taking part in labour". Lots, it claimed, go on to work in greenhouses after release.

According to the article, published on July 28th, the prison authorities have now perfected the political management of the prisons. The reporter gave one example of this: he saw cadres teaching prisoners how to sew on buttons, thus "improving their capability to take care of themselves". The report concluded with the news that at New Year prisoners greet prison cadres with the words "zhaxidele" ["Tashi delek" - literally, "Good luck" or "Hello"], which showed that "both parties share each other's feelings."

TIBETANS IN THE PLA

10% of the officers in the army serving in the Tibet Region are Tibetan, according to a report by the Hong Kong paper Wen Wei Po on March 30th. 3 of them are generals, and 164 are majors. 95% are members of the Party. The article emphasised that entrance requirements are relaxed in order to allow Tibetans to become officers, and quoted Jiang Hongquan, Commander of the Tibet Military Region, as saying that the Tibetan officers were "constantly maturing", adding that none of them were illiterate.

A Xinhua report on April 21st claimed that 55,000 - that is 78% - of Communist Party members in the Tibet Autonomous Region were Tibetan, saying that 4,000 had joined the Party there in the three years 1986 - 1989.

September 15th 1989

TIN News Update

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